

While I have not named the other courageous Democrats, I thank them all for their commitment to justice and integrity. No game playing, no playing both sides, the Texans took a stand. They stood against an unnecessary and unprecedented procedure which was an insult to Texas voters. They stood against the destruction of our current process which protects the voting rights of Texas citizens, and they stood against a special interest legislative agenda which placed politics before issues that are critical to Texas families such as school finance and the State budget and insurance crisis.

As I reflect upon the actions of the Texas House Democrats, I am disturbed by the reaction of their Republican counterparts in securing involvement in the Department of Homeland Security and its resources in this political matter.

The mission of the Department of Homeland Security is to prevent terrorist attacks within the United States, reduce America's vulnerability to terrorism, and minimize the damage and recover from attacks that do occur.

Further, the Department's mandate is to mobilize and focus the resources of the Federal Government to accomplish this mission. For 2003, the Homeland Security budget is \$33.5 billion and the administration's fiscal year 2004 request is \$36.2 billion at a 7.4 percent increase.

The budgetary line items for the agency include improving information analyses and infrastructure protection, preparing for and responding to national emergencies, securing the Nation's borders and transportation systems, improving immigration services, and advancing science and technology. There is no budgetary line item slated for tracking down State legislators who are not terrorists and not a threat to homeland security.

Consequently, the Texas Republicans and this administration must answer the following question: Were the citizens of this Nation served well in the use of resources by the Department of Homeland Security in a Texas political matter? I submit that the answer is no.

Again, I salute the Texas House Democrats for their courageous and principled action and urge the administration to guarantee that the Department of Homeland Security follows its mandate: namely, securing our homeland from terrorism, not State legislators.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO CHARLES TANGORA AND JACK KELLEY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MCCOTTER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, last week my district lost two beloved members of our community so, with sadness, I pay them posthumous tribute today.

Local attorney, civic activist, and despite the fact I was the worst law clerk he ever hired, my friend, Charles "Chuck" Tangora will truly be mourned and missed. While practicing law in Livonia for over 35 years, he raised a fine family and still found time to help improve the quality of life in our community, including being instrumental in ensuring the city of Livonia elected its first female City Council President, a quiet, mild-mannered schoolteacher named Georgia Joan McCotter.

Of course, Chuck's natural leadership abilities were recognized by all involved. He was the president of the Italian American Club, past president of Livonia Rotary and of the American Diabetes Association. And, most importantly, he was known as the one person who could always bring opposing sides to a consensus in the community's best interests. Most recently, Chuck was instrumental in raising the sizable reward which helped police solve the Marco Pesce family murder case.

And for all his benevolent works, Chuck, true to his fine, kind character never asked for anything in return but the smiles of those whose lives he touched. And once the immediate pain of his passing wanes in the winds of wistful recollection, as he, himself, would earnestly wish, there will again be smiles upon the faces of all who remember his life's legacy.

Mr. Speaker, the second pillar of our community to fall was the Honorable Jack Kelley, who gave 19 years of distinguished public service to the city he loved as a member of the Detroit City Council. If one word were used to sum up the man, no, it would not be one of the colorful words he often used, it would be the word "honest." And if two words were used, they would be "brutally honest."

It was his innate, intense honesty which led him to be a fast friend and fair foe, a colorful Celt who understood the brevity and the levity of our frail, flawed existence and felt compelled to help his fellow human beings in the short, sweet time God allowed.

And he did. After graduating from St. Francis DeSales High School, he joined the Navy and served his country for 30 months in the Pacific arena during World War II. Upon his return home, he commenced a career of public service by being appointed deputy director of the Building and Safety Engineering Department by then-Mayor Cavanagh, a post he held for 30 years. Then he was elected to his council seat in 1974, and even now his legacy continues as his son, Kevin, the Redford Township supervisor, followed in his Democratic footsteps and continued the father's noble tradition of public service.

Yes, a staunch Democrat, proud union man, and devout Irish Catholic, Jack Kelley's greatness was, to me, best expressed by another staunch Democrat, proud union member, devout Irish Catholic, and boyhood friend

of Jack Kelley's, my late father who said, "Jack Kelley was the only person I ever voted for who tried to break my nose. He is good people." Truly, we will never see the likes of Jack Kelley again, and truly we are all the lesser for his loss.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL SERIOUSLY FLAWED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, the House is about to consider the defense authorization bill that, sadly, is seriously flawed. It would exempt not only the military but all Federal agencies from certain aspects of the Endangered Species Act and the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

Instead of addressing real threats to readiness, the administration and Congress is taking on an easier target, the dolphins. Using defense as cover, the Republicans propose to make changes to environmental laws in ways which have nothing to do with defense readiness, suggesting that was not their goal in the first place.

The bill would take out one of the key provisions of the ESA by requiring that only critical habitat that is deemed necessary shall be designated. Without a definition of necessary, this invites abuse and applies to all Federal lands, not just the Department of Defense.

The bill also includes the Department of Defense proposal eliminating critical habitat designation altogether on lands owned or controlled by the military.

The bill contains a rider to exempt the Department of Defense at Fort Huachuca in Arizona from any responsibility for off-base groundwater pumping that threatens the existence of the San Pedro River. This rider was not requested by the Department of Defense, nor does it address military training or preparedness, and it has created a firestorm in the State of Arizona.

The authorization bill weakens the Marine Mammal Protection Act, weakening the current definition of harassment of marine mammals. It applies to all ocean users, not just the Department of Defense.

Finally, it allows the Department to exempt itself from the Marine Mammal Protection Act for anything necessary for national defense. It excludes any meaningful involvement of the wildlife agencies, the States, Congress and the public in review of these exemptions.

Our military activities are the largest source of pollution in the country. We are the wealthiest and most powerful and most polluting country in the world. We ought to be able to figure out how to better address this problem without compromising the environmental survival of what we are fighting to protect. Given the right direction and adequate resources, our military can achieve tremendous results.

The exemptions we are debating this week are wrong on so many different levels.

First of all, the legislation is unnecessary. There is already a waiver provision in place in the law for years. There has never been a case where for military necessity a waiver has not been granted. Never, not one. Not one example has been produced before the committees that are examining this.

Additionally, it misses the real threat to military readiness, what is termed encroachment. This is the same sprawl and unplanned growth that threatens our farms and forestlands, pollutes our air and water, and congests our roadways, and this is a real threat to our ability to train and maintain the world's mightiest fighting force.

Across the country, from Ft. Stewart, Georgia, to Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada, development is threatening the armed forces' ability to fly planes, maneuver and conduct other readiness activities. This has led the State of California to pass their Senate bill 1468 which recognizes the long-term operations of military installations must involve a partnership between the State, local agencies and the Federal Government.

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It provides the military, environmental organizations and local planning agencies the tools to work together to fight common enemies of military readiness like suburban sprawl. But this proposal is completely absent from the legislation coming before us.

The defense authorization bill is also wrong on a very fundamental level. It is missing an opportunity to use the Department of Defense to set the highest standards. Again, given adequate resources and the right orders, our Department of Defense can achieve any mission. We are missing that opportunity.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, there is a fundamental arrogance and hypocrisy that somehow the Federal Government's rules and regulations are necessary to protect the environment. We will impose them on small business or local government but not on us ourselves. It is the wrong signal and the wrong direction to protect endangered species and the health of our planet.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1904, HEALTHY FORESTS RESTORATION ACT OF 2003

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 108-109) on the resolution (H. Res. 239) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1904) to improve the capacity of the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior to plan and conduct hazardous fuels reduction projects on National Forest System lands and

Bureau of Land Management lands aimed at protecting communities, watersheds, and certain other at-risk lands from catastrophic wildfire, to enhance efforts to protect watersheds and address threats to forest and rangeland health, including catastrophic wildfire, across the landscape, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

TRIBUTE TO HONORABLE LARRY COMBEST ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Chairman LARRY COMBEST on a long and successful congressional career. I was privileged to serve on the Committee on Agriculture under LARRY. We were certainly at opposite ends of the spectrum. My first 2 years on the committee were LARRY'S last 2. I was without status. He was the chairman. Regardless of seniority, each person had access to LARRY and his staff on an equal basis. I have always felt that the true measure of a person's character was how he treated those who could do nothing for him. In that respect, I thought that LARRY was really exemplary and I really appreciated the way I was received.

The most significant accomplishment of the Committee on Agriculture the last 2 years was reauthorization of the farm bill. This was a very exhaustive process. It went on over 2 years, involving roughly 50 hearings, 25 of those in various parts of the country and 25 here in Washington. Input was received from such diverse groups as the Farm Bureau, Farmers Union, corn and soybean, rice and cotton, fruits and vegetables, Ducks Unlimited, Nature Conservancy and the Sierra Club. Everybody had a chance.

What the chairman did was ask each group to write the farm bill as they saw it needing to be written and also to score it, to come up with what it was going to cost; and so this was kind of a unique approach because I think everybody that tried began to realize how complex this was.

Again, he took input from every group. The bill was written in full committee, which I appreciated. Everybody had a chance to speak their piece. It was truly bipartisan. We hear the term bipartisan around here all the time, but this was a case where I can really, honestly say that I do not believe either side was given any advantage and that each side felt they had equal ownership, and as a result the farm bill was passed almost unanimously out of the Committee on Agriculture.

LARRY was under a great deal of pressure to delay the writing of the farm bill until 2003. Yet he realized that agriculture was in trouble, that we were surviving each year on roughly a 7, \$7.5

billion emergency payment and this simply could not go on, so he pressed forward and got the bill done in 2002 in the face of a fair amount of criticism. I thought that he showed great tenacity in doing so, and I really appreciated his efforts.

I visited South America with LARRY and other members of the Committee on Agriculture a little bit more than a year ago, and I can recall one meeting in Brazil with their agriculture leadership in which they were very critical of U.S. farm policy. They thought they were poised to take over the soybean market of the world, and I remember LARRY'S response. He said, "My responsibility is to protect the interests of American farmers and ranchers." That is what he did. Our farmers and ranchers really comprise only 1 percent roughly of our population. At one time they were a very significant part of our population. Now they are about 1 percent, and so they certainly need advocates. I really appreciate the fact that Chairman COMBEST truly did all that he could to represent a very important and often unappreciated part of our Nation.

I would like to thank the chairman for his contribution and for his career here and for the way that he worked with other people to bring agriculture to the forefront during the farm bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

TEXAS REDISTRICTING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, before I discuss some comments I would like to make about the courageous acts of 51 Texas legislators last week, I want to join my Republican colleagues in thanking Congressman LARRY COMBEST for so many years of dedicated public service to the State of Texas and to our country.

Those of us who believe that one of the strengths of our country comes from the values of rural America, one of the strengths of our economy comes from the productivity of our family farmers and ranchers, all of us who believe those things owe a debt of gratitude, an everlasting debt of gratitude to LARRY COMBEST for his bipartisan and strong leadership in our country not only as chairman of the Committee on Agriculture but as chairman of the very important Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence through which he served our Nation's security in so many important ways.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to talk about the actions of last week where we had